



News Release

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Contact: Keith Lind (207) 622-8551

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U.S. Small Business Administration Celebrates Women's History Month

District Director Amy Bassett Visits Pieceworks, Inc., a successful woman-owned small business

Augusta, Maine – In celebration of Women's History Month, on March 20th, Amy Bassett, District Director and Diane Sturgeon, Deputy District Director joined Betty Gensel of the Women's Business Center at CEI to visit Cathy Roberts, owner of Pieceworks, Inc. in Montville, ME. The company is a contract manufacturer offering customized solutions to streamline clients manufacturing and production needs in a cost effective manner.

Since its humble beginnings, Cathy's company has moved into its own factory and now boasts a workforce of up to 10 staff who fulfill a critical role in the manufacturing process. Each new contract requires innovation and creativity, which energizes Cathy and her staff to meet challenges that stretch their problem solving skills and creative abilities.

However, with a depressed economy and a drop in larger manufacturing clients, Cathy felt the business needed new direction a few years ago, so she began meeting with Betty Gensel, Women's Business Center business counselor. Cathy credits business counseling with helping her redefine the company's market niche by targeting home-based and microbusinesses that are experiencing growth pains and may lack capacity for and expertise in larger scale production.

Thanks in part to business counseling, Cathy is now intentionally diversified and flexible to reflect the needs of new, growing, and internet companies for a shift in manufacturing, while she keeps up contracts with her initial customer base of larger manufacturing concerns.

Women's History Month dates back to the 1980s, when it was first a weeklong celebration before being extended by a Congressional resolution. Celebrations during the month of March typically include mentions of notable women throughout history.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) was created in 1953, and assists our nation's small businesses in creating jobs, preserving free competitive enterprise, and strengthening the overall economy of our nation.

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